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ABSTRACT

The Teaching Skills Program for students in secondary education is a part of a sequence of varied experiences in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, University of Kentucky. Through microteaching, every student participates in the following five teaching experiences: (1) instructional objectives and presentation, (2) questioning, (3) interaction, (4) refocusing, and (5) summary teach. The sequence of teaching episodes allows the student to move gradually from a teacher-centered activity to a student-centered activity. In this program students apply concepts derived from various learning theories, utilize materials that are specifically related to their discipline, and develop learning strategies that were encountered in the special methods courses. Following the microteaching sessions, the "teacher" receives feedback from his/her students and instructor with emphasis placed on constructive criticism to reinforce those skills that were demonstrated effectively and suggestions for improving others. In addition, videotaping allows the student to do a self-evaluation. (JMF)

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Teaching Skills Program

Overview

The secondary education program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Kentucky includes a Teaching Skills Laboratory in which students apply concepts derived from various learning theories, utilize materials that are specifically related to their discipline and develop learning strategies that were encountered in the special methods courses. Students participate in micro-teaching sessions which allow them to develop teaching skills such as presentation, questioning, interaction and refocusing. They can draw upon the methods and materials from the special methods courses to plan the lessons they teach. Each student demonstrates his level of teaching skill by teaching a small group of his peers. Following the lesson the "teacher" receives feedback from his students and his instructor. Emphasis is placed on constructive criticism with reinforcement of those skills that were demonstrated effectively and suggestions for improving others.

After being video-taped the student views his replay and writes a self-evaluation. If the student and the instructor decide that the skills have not been met, the student may reteach his lesson.

Student evaluations of the teaching skills program are taken each semester. The evaluations are studied carefully for suggestions that can be used to improve the course.

Students from colleges other than the College of Education participate in the Teaching Skills Laboratory. Several groups of teaching assistants from the College of Pharmacy have been trained in basic teaching skills. Teacher trainees from the College of Allied Health are participants in the program.

Description and Development of the Program

The Teaching Skills Program for students in secondary education is a part of a sequence of varied experiences in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, University of Kentucky.

Through micro-teaching every student participates in five teaching experiences: 1) Instructional Objectives and Presentation, 2) Questioning, 3) Interaction, 4) Refocusing, and 5) Summary Teach.

The sequence of teaching episodes allows the student to move gradually from a teacher-centered activity to a student-centered activity.

1) Instructional Objectives and Presentation provides opportunity for the student to teach a sequential lesson which is designed to focus on the achievement of objectives.
2) Questioning involves the skill of utilizing a variety of questions that require students to utilize higher levels of thinking.
3) Interaction calls for intense student involvement, which is achieved through well-planned and divergent types of eliciting questions, probing questions and reinforcement techniques.
4) Refocusing involves creative teaching and new ways of approaching the subject. Emphasis is given to motivating the students toward a high interest level and providing for student participation in all learning activities.
5) The Summary Teach facilitates the synthesis of all teaching skills in an integrated lesson.

Evaluation is provided in three ways:

1) Verbal critiques from peers, who role-play the students, and the instructor.
2) Written evaluations by the instructor.
3) Personal evaluation after viewing a video-taped replay of the lesson.

Student needs in the preparation and evaluation of teaching experiences are provided for through individual conferences.

The program developed gradually from one video-taped micro-teaching episode for every secondary education student to the current sequence of five episodes. As the program grew it became apparent that we had to design our own program and write our own material to provide the maximum number of teaching skills in the time available during one semester. The Handbook For Teaching Performance, which was written cooperatively by several members of our staff, serves as the text for the course.

Objectives

The general objectives of the program are to encourage each student to build a conceptual framework through the acquisition of understandings and attitudes that accompany necessary skills for successful teaching. At the conclusion of the program the student should have gained the competency of good instructional planning and be capable of evaluating his own teaching and the teaching of others. In order to achieve these objectives each student will:

1) formulate teaching objectives for his particular discipline
2) select activities and experiences which result in achievement of goals
3) demonstrate that learning requires involvement of the learner
4) apply the concepts of learning theory in the writing of lesson plans
5) demonstrate the purposes, methods and uses of evaluation by utilizing it
6) utilize new techniques in his field as described in journals, yearbooks and texts
7) construct and utilize appropriate audio-visual media
8) plan for and demonstrate specified skills of teaching
9) analyze and evaluate various teaching episodes

Personnel Involved

Each class requires an instructor and a teaching assistant. The class is limited to twenty-four students. Each class is divided into two groups when the students teach. The instructor works with one group while the teaching assistant works with the other. Work-study students assist with replays of video-tapes.

Budget

Instructors' Salary Based upon rank and merit pay increases

Teaching Assistants

1. Master's degree candidate with teaching experience $2800
2. Doctor's degree candidate with teaching experience $4000

Equipment

1. 3 video-tape recorders	$2100
2. 3 video cameras	1800
3. 3 monitors	690
4. 3 microphones	75
5. video-tape	750

Annual maintenance of equipment $300-$400

Contribution to the Improvement of Teacher Education

The inclusion of the Teaching Skills Laboratory led to a modification of the sequence, content, and curriculum of the total secondary education program. Prior to the development of this program, the course sequence consisted of general methods, special methods, and student teaching. After the inclusion of the Teaching Skills Laboratory the sequence became special methods, teaching skills, and student teaching. The special methods courses are basically experiential with a field experience component as an integral part of the course. The field experience directs the student toward the recognition of his need for specific competencies which are introduced in

the Teaching Skills Laboratory the following semester. The student culminates his experience by utilizing his background in special methods and the teaching skills program in his student teaching. The success of the entire program resulted in a paper regarding the performance-based teacher preparation program which was presented at the national convention of the Conference on English Education in Colorado Springs, Colorado (1975). Not only has the Teaching Skills Laboratory made an impact on our own secondary education program, but also it has been adopted for teacher training in two other colleges at the University of Kentucky. The College of Pharmacy now utilizes our program and instructors for training its teaching assistants. The success of this program led to the presentation of a paper at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (1975). The College of Allied Health is utilizing this program and the instructors for training teachers in the Allied Health field. Federally supported workshops for training teaching personnel for Allied Health, which are based on the format of the Teaching Skills Laboratory, are proving to be very successful. Two of the current instructors in the Laboratory and one former instructor are included in the teaching staff. Participants have rated this workshop as the most effective experience they have had to improve their teaching.

Evaluation Methods and Results

Student evaluations have been used extensively in the development and modification of the course. In response to subjective questions a large majority of students stated that the most important benefit they gained from the micro-teaching experience was the development of self-confidence in a teaching situation. Furthermore, they commented frequently that the micro-teaching experience was an aid in learning how to plan and organize. Additionally, many students stressed the beneficial effects of new ideas and teaching strategies presented in the course.

Objective evaluations support the subjective data gathered from the students. The method of instruction in the Laboratory included: 1) presentations by the instructor (rated by 74.3% of the students as "useful" to "essential") 2) viewing and critiquing model tapes (79.3% rated "useful" to "essential," and 3) modules (85.2% rated "useful" to "essential").

Viewing the video-tape replays was considered to be "helpful" to "very helpful" by 84.1% of the students in improving their teaching. Using previous evaluation of the student's teaches "significantly influenced" to "greatly influenced" 63.4% of the students in improvement of their teaching.

A follow-up study after student teaching to determine how well the students had consciously utilized the skills learned in the Laboratory revealed that 88% considered organization and planning to be "somewhat helpful" to "very helpful" and 88% considered the work on instructional objectives to be "helpful" to "very helpful." The students indicated that they deliberately planned for the use of: 1) higher level questions, 86% "sometimes" to "always"; 2) interaction, 92% "sometimes" to "always"; and 3) refocusing, 88% "sometimes" to "always."

The students rank-ordered the value of the courses taken in the education sequence. The Teaching Skills Laboratory ranked first, followed by their special methods course (a component of the total secondary education program).

Continuous evaluation leads us to conclude first, that we are achieving success in the development of this program, and second, that there is more to be done. Currently we are involving more college supervisors in the Teaching Skills Laboratory; their response is enthusiastic, and appears to justify our belief that materials for other teaching skills should be developed and added to the program.

George W Denemark

Chief Institutional Representative